

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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R 131555Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 205

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 659

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LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASS, JM

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE KINGSTON

REF STATE 033550

1. IN CONNECTION CLEAN SLATE PLANNING WE HAD IN FACT CONTEMPLATED DOWNGRADING DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE FROM FIELD GRADE RANK TO MAJOR OR CAPTAIN, U S MARINE CORPS (OR OTHER SERVICE EQUIVALENT). WE ALSO HAVE CONTEMPLATED REDUCTION TOTAL DAO STAFF FROM THREE TO TWO. FIRST OF ABOVE MEASURES HAD TO BE SET ASIDE OWING FACT PRESENT ATTACHE'S REPLACEMENT HAD BEEN SELECTED AND WAS IN TRAINING BEFORE OUR CLEAN SLATE PROPOSALS HAD BEEN FINALIZED--BUT RANK DOWNGRADING REMAINS LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE. WE STILL CONTEMPLATE REDUCTION OF OFFICE FROM THREE TO TWO POSITIONS DURING FY 77.

2. IN RESPONSE REFTTEL, WE DO BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAIN A DEFENSE ATTACHE PRESENCE. ASIDE FROM NORMAL INTELLIGENCE FUNCTIONS (WHICH FOR THE MOST PART PROBABLY COULD BE DONE AWAY WITH), ATTACHE FUNCTION IS ESSENTIAL IN CONNECTION VERY FREQUENT SHIP VISITS (SEVERAL PER MONTH), LIAISON WITH GUANTANAMO NAVAL BASE WHERE THERE ARE NEARLY 1,000 CONTRACT JAMAICAN LABORERS, AND FMS PROGRAM. SA SMALLER DAO COULD HANDLE ALL OF THESE FUNCTIONS, BUT NONE COULD BE ADEQUATELY
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HANDLED BY THIS EMBASSY IN ABSENCE OF DAO. INDEED, WE

PROBABLY WILL HAVE TO REQUEST TERMINATION SHIP VISITS
IF LATTER EVENTUATES

3. FROM EMBASSY'S POINT OF VIEW, IN EXTREMIS WE MIGHT
BE ABLE CONTINUE ALL IMPORTANT SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMS INVOLVING DAO WITH ONLY ONE OFFICER AND NO SUPPORT STAFF. HOWEVER, THIS ASSUMES COMPLETE STANDARDIZATION/INTEGRATION ALL AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS PER MY CLEAN SLATE MESSAGES, AND SHARP REDUCTION DIA-LEVIED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

4. FINALLY, IT MAY BE A NON SEQUITUR, BUT IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT VENEZUELANES HAVE JUST STATIONED A DEFENSE ATTACHE IN KINGSTON, WHILE THE BRITISH ARE SHIFTING THEIR REGIONAL DEFENSE ADVISORY OFFICE FROM BERMUDA TO KINGSTON. LATTER OFFICE WILL COVER ENTIRE CARIBBEAN AND COULD BECOME A USEFUL CONTACT POINT VIS-A-VIS ALL OUR DEFENSE INTERESTS IN THIS AREA. GERARD

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